

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:02 p.m. on Wednesday, May 17, 2006, in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Horwich.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Browning, Busch, Drevno, Faulk, Gibson, Horwich, and Chairperson Uchima.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Sr. Planning Associate Lodan, Planning Associate Crecy, Deputy City Attorney Whitham, Plans Examiner Nishioka, Fire Marshal Kazandjian, and Associate Civil Engineer Symons.

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Browning, seconded by Commissioner Busch, moved to accept and file the report of the secretary on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of the April 5, 2006 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Drevno and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Commissioners Faulk and Gibson abstaining.

**6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENT**

Sr. Planning Associate Lodan advised that staff was recommending that Item 10C, PRE06-00006, WAV06-00006: John and Shari Bukowski – 5117 Carol Drive, be continued to June 7, 2006 because the owner of an adjacent property (5111 Carol Drive) reported that he did not receive notification of the hearing.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Faulk moved to continue Agenda Item 10C to June 7, 2006. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by a 6-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Horwich dissenting.

Commenting on his vote, Commissioner Horwich stated that he saw no reason to continue the hearing because the neighbor in question was obviously aware of the project as he had sent an e-mail outlining his objections (supplemental material).

Commissioner Browning expressed concerns about whether there was adequate access for fire fighting equipment at 5117 Carol Drive. Fire Marshal Kazandjian offered to visit the site before the June 7 meeting.

Sr. Planning Associate Lodan noted that the hearing on Agenda Item 10C would not be re-advertised as it was continued to a date certain.

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Chairperson Uchima reviewed the policies and procedures of the Planning Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to the City Council.

## **7. TIME EXTENSIONS**

### **7A. MIS06-00117: MIGUEL SANCHEZ**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Time Extension for a previously approved Tentative Parcel Map (DIV02-00021) for condominium purposes on property located in the R-2 Zone at 2605 Carson Street.

#### **Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting amending the Time Extension to February 19, 2007.

(No representative of the applicant was present.)

Commissioner Busch noted that this project was originally approved in February 2003 and one extension has already been granted and questioned why it was taking so long to complete.

Sr. Planning Associate Lodan recalled that there was a problem with the financing for the project.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Gibson, seconded by Commissioner Busch, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of MIS06-00117. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by a 6-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Busch dissenting.

Commissioner Busch stated that he voted "no" because he was concerned about granting another extension without additional information and the applicant was not available to answer his questions.

Planning Associate Crecy read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-061.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Faulk moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-061. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Drevno and passed by a 6-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Busch dissenting.

**8. CONTINUED HEARINGS**

**8A. DIV06-00003: DEL AMO FASHION CENTER OPERATING COMPANY, LLC**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Division of Lot to allow a lot line adjustment between APN 7366-019-085 and APN 7388-019-088 on property located in Hawthorne Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan Zone, Del Amo Business Sub-District One at 3525 Carson Street.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Susan Hori, representing Del Amo Fashion Center Operating Company, explained that the lot line adjustment was necessary to facilitate the construction of the new Crate and Barrel store. She voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

In response to Commissioner Busch's inquiry, Ms. Hori confirmed that all parties had agreed to the lot line adjustment.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Browning, seconded by Commissioner Faulk, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved for the approval of DIV06-00003 as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Associate Crecy read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-038.

**MOTION:** Commission Horwich moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-038. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**9. WAIVERS – None.**

**10. FORMAL HEARINGS**

**10A. CUP06-00005, DIV06-00006: JAMES AND SHARON ROSENBERGER  
(CHERYL VARGO – SUBTEC)**

Planning Commission consideration of a Conditional Use Permit to allow two existing dwelling units to be converted into condominiums and a Division of Lot for condominium purposes on property located in the R-2 Zone at 18500 and 18502 Mansel Avenue.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of a revised Resolution No. 06-062.

Cheryl Vargo, representing the applicant, reported that the project will include a new roof, upgraded plumbing and architectural enhancements, as well as the construction of curbs, gutters and sidewalks in the public right-of-way. She noted that the Floor Area Ratio is well below what is currently permitted and the project includes ample open space. She requested that Condition No. 4, which requires the installation of electric roll up garage doors, be deleted because roll up doors are already in place and asked that the requirement that an acoustical study be performed (Condition No. 6) also be deleted because both the Planning Department and Building and Safety indicated that this requirement would be waived because the units are detached.

In response to Commission Busch's inquiry, Ms. Vargo confirmed that tenants have been informed of the plans to convert the apartments into condominiums and that a relocation plan will be filed as required.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Horwich, seconded by Commissioner Drevno, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of CUP06-00005 and DIV06-00006, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff with the following modifications:

**Modify**

No. 4 That automatic garage doors shall be ~~installed~~ confirmed.

No. 6 That the applicant shall provide a general structural condition report, a pest information report ~~and a report performed by an acoustical engineer~~ to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fauk and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Associate Crecy read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 06-062 and 06-063.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Horwich moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 06-062 and 06-063 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**10B. PCR06-00002: RON DAVIS (KENNETH TOKITA)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Planning Commission Review to allow the development of three new dwelling units on property located in the Residential Professional Zone at 22911 Arlington Avenue.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of correspondence from Susan Miuccio, 2212 W. 229<sup>th</sup> Street.

Ron Davis, project architect, noted that the units will be apartments and there are no plans to convert them into condominiums.

Commissioner Browning questioned whether the units comply with Title 24 requirements with regard to providing access for the disabled.

Mr. Davis stated that he was not sure the project was subject to Title 24, however, the six-inch step in the entry could be ramped if necessary.

Plans Examiner Nishioka related his understanding that only multi-family developments of 4 units or more are subject to Title 24. Commissioner Browning recalled that the General Plan specifies 3 or more units.

Referring to concerns about construction noise in Ms. Miuccio's letter, Commissioner Horwich questioned whether the applicant would be amenable to conditions prohibiting loud radio playing on the job site and limiting construction to Monday through Saturday, with no construction on Sundays.

Mr. Davis reported that there will be no construction on Sundays and that the applicant would notify workers of the ban on loud radios.

Commissioner Busch asked if the applicant had considered building only two units instead of three.

Mr. Davis responded that the applicant elected to build three reasonably sized units, noting that the zoning actually allows for four units on this site and the proposed project meets all requirements.

Susan Miuccio, 2212 W. 229<sup>th</sup> Street, stated that she was under the impression that the units were going to be condominiums and she felt rental units were less desirable. She briefly reviewed the concerns detailed in her letter regarding existing parking problems in the neighborhood, the impact of having six more trash containers at the curb on trash day, and the noise and inconvenience associated with construction

activities. She called for parking problems to be resolved before any new construction takes place.

Commissioner Horwich voiced his opinion that it would be unreasonable to deny this project based on existing parking problems caused by older apartments/condominiums in the area, which were built before today's more stringent parking requirements. Referring to Ms. Miuccio's letter, he questioned her concern about the Victoria box tree on her property.

Ms. Miuccio explained that the tree is near the property line and she does not want it trimmed without her written permission. Commissioner Horwich suggested that Ms. Miuccio discuss this matter with the contractor.

Mr. Davis doubted that there would be any need to trim the tree; offered to build an enclosure for the trash bins; and maintained that the project includes ample parking. He voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Faulk, seconded by Commissioner Drevno, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Commissioner Browning indicated that he was not inclined to support the project, citing concerns about the loss of street parking due to the new curb cut; the adequacy of the on-site parking with only one guest space for three residences; and the massiveness of the structure. He noted that while the Residential Professional Zone does not include a floor area ratio limitation, the project has an FAR close to .60, not including the 1200 square feet of garage space, and that the side yard setback on the southerly side is only 5 feet.

Voicing support for the project, Commissioner Faulk stated that he believed the units would be a significant improvement for this site; that he was pleased that they are rental units as they are very seldom built in Torrance; and that he thought the project was reasonable in size and compatible with the mix of uses in this area.

Sr. Planning Associate Lodan noted that in addition to the seven required parking spaces, there are two other areas on-site where vehicles could park and that a curb cut is necessary because there is no alley access. He provided clarification regarding the reference to Title 24 in the General Plan.

In response to Commissioner Busch's inquiry, Sr. Planning Associate Lodan advised that the applicant would have to wait at least one year and apply for a Conditional Use Permit and Division of Lot, which require Planning Commission approval, in order to convert the units into condominiums.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of PCR06-00002, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modifications:

**Add**

- That there shall be no construction on Sundays.
- That there shall be no loud playing of radios.
- That a specific area for the storage of trash containers shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Drevno and passed by 5-2 roll call vote, with Commissioners Browning and Bush dissenting.

Planning Associate Crecy read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-064.

In response to Commissioner Browning's inquiry, Deputy City Attorney Whitham confirmed that a commissioner may vote "yes" on the resolution even if he or she voted "no" on the project.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-064 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by a 6-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Busch dissenting.

**10C. PRE06-00006, WAV06-00006: JOHN AND SHARI BUKOWSKI**

Planning Commission consideration of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of first and second-story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 5117 Carol Drive.

Continued to June 7, 2006.

**10D. CUP06-00007: SHARON IMEL**

Planning Commission consideration of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the use of tandem parking for a portion of the required parking in conjunction with the construction of a detached studio unit while maintaining the existing front residential unit on property located in the R-3 Zone at 729 Border Avenue.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Sharon Imel, 729 Border Avenue, reported that she plans to preserve the front Craftsman-style unit on the subject property and build a studio over the garage for her artwork. She voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

In response to Commissioner Browning's inquiry, Ms. Imel indicated that she hopes to save the large tree at the rear of her property.

Plans Examiner Nishioka confirmed that the applicant will be required to underground utilities.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Horwich, seconded by Commissioner Busch, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved for the approval of CUP06-00007 as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Associate Crecy read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-067.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-067. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**10E. PCR06-00003: DIO YANG**

Planning Commission consideration of a Planning Commission Review to allow the construction of a new shopping center on property located in the C-2 Zone at 20305 Anza Avenue.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of Code Requirements inadvertently omitted from the original staff report.

Mary Larson, representing the applicant, expressed concerns about Condition No. 3, which prohibits restaurant uses in the shopping center, because it would preclude potential tenants such as a Starbucks-type coffee shop.

Sr. Planning Associate Lodan clarified that the prohibition applies to food uses with seating capacity because they require 1 parking space per 100 square feet of tenant space as opposed to retail uses, which require 1 parking space per 200 square feet of space. He confirmed that a take-out restaurant would be permitted, but noted that it would require a Conditional Use Permit.

At Ms. Larson's request, Sr. Planning Associate Lodan provided clarification regarding Condition No. 8, which requires the establishment of an easement to allow for cross access between the subject property and the adjacent parcel at such time as the property redevelops. He advised that two parking spaces would likely be lost, but the project would still comply with parking requirements for retail uses.

Voicing support for the project, Commissioner Busch noted that he visited the site and believes the center would be a good addition to the community.

George Wallace, owner of the adjacent shopping center, expressed concerns about allowing a drive-through restaurant at this location; questioned whether air conditioning equipment on the roof would be visible from the street; and requested clarification of the requirement for a cross-access easement, noting that the subject property is 2 ½ feet higher than his property.



Sr. Planning Associate Lodan advised that the applicant will work with staff to delineate the cross access on the subject property and the adjacent property will not be affected until such time as it is redeveloped.

Chairperson Uchima clarified that the application does not include a drive-through restaurant, and the owner of the property shared a rendering of the project.

Commissioner Faulk noted that there is a requirement that any mechanical equipment on the roof be screened from view.

Commissioner Gibson expressed concerns that added traffic would endanger children going to and from schools in the vicinity.

Nick Bazos, 20331 Anza Avenue, #4, voiced concerns that the project would interfere with visibility and make it more difficult to get in and out of the driveway leading to the underground parking for his complex. He indicated that he was also concerned about the safety of school children, noting that there are three schools – Bert Lynn, Victor and West High – in the immediate vicinity.

In response to Chairperson Uchima's inquiry, Sr. Planning Associate Lodan confirmed that Transportation Division staff had reviewed the proposal with regard to traffic safety issues. He noted that the applicant will be required to dedicate 6 feet of property along Del Amo Boulevard to provide for a right-turn lane to alleviate traffic congestion in the vicinity.

Commissioner Horwich doubted that the proposed project would generate more traffic than the gas station that was formerly on this site.

Carla Conte, 20331 Anza Avenue, #12, noted that her unit overlooks the site and questioned whether there were any height restrictions on the project. She pointed out that the buildings on the other three corners of the intersection are set back further from the street.

Commissioner Horwich voiced his opinion that the configuration of the proposed project was safer than two of the corners at this intersection, both of which have three driveways, and that cross-access between the site and the adjacent property was essential.

Commissioner Gibson pointed out that the hours of operation of the retail uses in the proposed shopping center could make a big difference to adjacent residents, noting the auto repair shop that took over the site after the gas station closed at 6:00 p.m.

Sr. Planning Associate Lodan advised that there are currently no restrictions on the hours of operation. In response to Ms. Conte's comments, he explained that the applicant was proposing a one-story building the majority of which is 16 feet in height with architectural embellishments up to 18 feet.

Chairperson Uchima recalled that a structure at Hawthorne Boulevard and Del Amo was similar in height and massing and questioned whether there have been any traffic issues associated with it. Sr. Planning Associate Lodan indicated that he was not aware of any problems.

Ms. Larson voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval and confirmed that there would be no drive-through or sit-down restaurant.

In response to Commissioner Busch's inquiry, Ms. Larson indicated that the applicant would be agreeable to no construction on Sundays.

Commissioner Gibson stated that she thought it was a very nice project but could not support it because she didn't think it was suitable for this location.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Faulk, seconded by Commissioner Drevno, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Voicing support for the project, Commissioner Faulk stated that he believed it was well designed and it could lead to the improvement of nearby properties.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of PCR06-00003 as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modification:

**Add**

- That there shall be no construction on Sundays.

**Modify**

No. 3 That no sit-down restaurant uses are permitted in this center.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by a 6-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Gibson dissenting.

Planning Associate Crecy read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-068.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-068 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by a 6-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Gibson dissenting.

The Commission recessed from 8:45 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

11. **RESOLUTIONS** – None.

12. **PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.

13. **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS** – None.

14. **REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS**

Sr. Planning Associate Lodan reported on recent City Council action on Planning matters, noting that the fence on Doris Way (MIS06-00021) was approved at the May 9 meeting and the project at 424 Camino de Encanto (PRE05-00034) was approved at the May 16 meeting with modifications.

**15. LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES**

Sr. Planning Associate Lodan reviewed the agenda for the June 7, 2006 Planning Commission meeting.

**16. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

**16A.** In a PowerPoint presentation, Richard Krebs, 5206 Ruby Street, requested that the Commission consider expanding the Hillside Overlay District to include his block and submitted a petition signed by each property owner.

**16B.** James White, 5214 Ruby Street, expressed concerns about remodeling projects being built with an architectural style that is not compatible with existing homes in the neighborhood.

In response to Chairperson Uchima's inquiry, Deputy City Attorney Whitham advised that while the Commission may not engage in a discussion of items not on the agenda, commissioners may direct staff to bring an item back for consideration in future.

Commissioner Horwich indicated that he did not favor instituting a design review process because he felt the design of one's home is a matter of personal choice, however, he was not opposed to taking another look at the boundaries of the Hillside Overlay District.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Horwich moved to direct staff to bring the matter of expanding the Hillside Overlay District back as an agenda item at a future meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Deputy City Attorney Whitham recommended that staff notify Mr. Krebs of the hearing date.

**16C.** Commissioner Browning asked that staff provide a briefing on Title 24 requirements.

**16D.** Commissioner Browning thanked staff for their prompt response to his requests for information.

**16E.** Chairperson Uchima reminded staff that he will not be present at the June 7 meeting because he will be out of town.

**16F.** Referring to Agenda Item 10B, Commissioner Horwich noted that it is not inconsistent for a commissioner to vote "no" on a project and vote "yes" on the resolution because the resolution simply documents the action taken by the Commission.

**17. ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:25 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, May 24, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. for a General Plan Workshop in City Council Chambers.

Approved as Submitted June 21, 2006 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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